

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims to read as follows:

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-17 (Cancelled).

18. (Currently Amended) A wireless communication method comprising:

at a media access controller controllers of all receiving stations in a communication system, detecting, in a received signal, an indication of whether or not a response is expected or whether or not there is an intent to continue and transmitting a detecting result to each station;

at a station receiving, in a received signal, the detecting result indicating an indication that a response is expected or there is an intent to continue, interpreting a first idle time slot subsequent to a transmission as being a time that is reserved for a signaled response/continuation, interpreting a second idle time slot subsequent to said transmission as being reserved for a network controller to gain a prioritized medium access, and interpreting a third idle time slot subsequent to said transmission as being a minimum time a station waiting to initiate a transmission on a medium must wait before commencing a backoff procedure or initiating a transmission, and responding to and continuing communicating with the media access controller in the first idle time slot; and

at a station receiving, within a received signal, the detecting result indicating an indication that a response is not expected or there is no intent to continue, redefining an interpretation of an inter-frame space to omit a time slot for responding to and continuing.

communicating with the media access controller, interpreting a first idle time slot subsequent to a transmission as being reserved for the network controller to gain a prioritized medium access, and interpreting a second idle time slot subsequent to said transmission as being a minimum time a station waiting to initiate a transmission on a medium must wait before commencing a backoff procedure or initiating a transmission.

19. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18, wherein said indication is included in a header of a frame.

20. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18, wherein said indication is included in a preamble of a frame.

21. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18, wherein said indication is included in a footer of a frame.

22. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18, wherein said indication is in the form of one subcarrier or plural subcarriers comprised of subcarriers for data transmission or a combination of subcarriers used for data transmission in a multicarrier symbol of a frame.

Claims 23-27 (Cancelled).

28. (Currently Amended) The wireless communication method according to claim 18, further comprising the steps of:

at the station receiving, within the received signal, the indication that a response is not expected or there is no intent to continue, checking a medium activity indicator determining the end of activity on the medium, and redefining the an interpretation of the an inter-frame space to contain a shorter time slot than a time slot usually allocated when the medium activity indicator is checked.

29. (Currently Amended) The wireless communication method according to claim 18, further comprising the steps of:

at the station receiving, within the received signal, the indication that a response is not expected or there is no intent to continue, resetting a medium activity indicator when no medium activity is indicated at the instant of time that activity is expected as indicated by the medium activity indicator, and redefining the an interpretation of the an inter-frame space to contain a shorter time slot than a time slot usually allocated when the medium activity indicator is reset.

Claim 30 (Cancelled).

31. (New) A station that communicates with a media access controller in a communication system, the station comprising:

a receiver that receives a signal that includes a detecting result indicating whether or not a response is expected or whether or not there is an intent to continue, from the media access controller; and

an interpreter that interprets an idle time slot based on the detecting result, wherein:

when the detecting result indicates a response is expected or there is an intent to continue, the interpreter interprets a first idle time slot subsequent to a transmission as being a time that is reserved for a signaled response/continuation, interprets a second idle time slot subsequent to said transmission as being reserved for a network controller to gain a prioritized medium access, and interprets a third idle time slot subsequent to said transmission as being a minimum time a station waiting to initiate a transmission on a medium must wait before commencing a backoff procedure or initiating a transmission, and responds to and continues communicating with the media access controller in the first time slot; and

when the detecting result indicates that a response is not expected or there is no intent to continue, the interpreter redefines an interpretation of an inter-frame space to omit a time slot for responding to and continuing communicating with the media access controller, interprets a first idle time slot subsequent to a transmission as being reserved for the a network controller to gain a prioritized medium access, and interprets a second idle time slot subsequent to said transmission as being a minimum time for which a station waiting to initiate a transmission on a medium must wait before commencing a backoff procedure or initiating a transmission.